

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint
~~United States District Court~~
 Southern District of Texas
 FILED

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

OCT 02 2020

for the

Southern District of Texas

David J. Bradley, Clerk

United States of America

v.

Reid Etheridge

YOB: 1979, United States of America

Case No. M-20-2048-M

Defendant(s)

SEALED CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of March 1, 2020 to October 1, 2020 in the county of Hidalgo in the
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

Offense Description

Title 18, United States Code,
 Section 2251(a)

Sexual Exploitation of Children

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See "Attachment A"

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Complaint Authorized: AUSA Michael Mitchell 10/2/2020

Sworn to and executed by reliable electronic means, sworn to U.S.
 Magistrate Judge Juan F. Alanis and attested telephonically per
 Fed.R.CR.4.1 and probable cause found on:

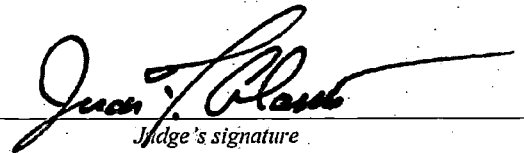
Date: 10/02/2020 @ 5:29 p.m.City and state: McAllen, Texas

s/Troy J. Guthrie

Complainant's signature

Troy J. Guthrie, Special Agent HSI

Printed name and title



Judge's signature

Honorable Magistrate Judge Juan F. Alanis

Printed name and title

ATTACHMENT "A"

On October 1, 2020, members of the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) led Rio Grande Valley Child Exploitation Investigation Task Force (RGV CEITF) were contacted by the Texas Attorney General's Office (AGO) with an investigative referral generated by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). The referral was from Google involving a suspect producing and uploading multiple files of child exploitation material to a Google account linked to a subscriber with email addresses [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. An investigation was initiated to identify the suspect(s).

Provided in the NCMEC report were approximately 323 images and video files of depicting young children engaged in sexually explicit conduct constituting child pornography. Upon review, it was determined that multiple files were unknown files of child exploitation material and appear to have been created by the individual that uploaded them to Google.

IP address [REDACTED] 113 was also provided in the NCMEC report, which is assigned to Charter Communications in McAllen, Texas. A summons return from Charter Communications revealed that IP address [REDACTED] 113 was registered to Reid Etheridge at [REDACTED] McAllen, Texas 78501.

On October 2, 2020, the HSI RGV CEITF executed a federal search warrant at [REDACTED] McAllen, Texas 78501. Agents encountered Reid ETHERIDGE (DOB: [REDACTED] 1979) at the front door of the residence. ETHERIDGE agreed to accompany HSI agents to the HSI McAllen office for an interview.

Under advisements of *Miranda* rights, ETHERIDGE agreed to give a statement. ETHERIDGE confirmed that he was the owner and user of both the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] email addresses, and stated he was employed as a professor at South Texas College. Subsequently, ETHERIDGE admitted to sexually assaulting a minor female child, whom he described as a four (4) year old female on at least six (6) occasions, beginning in approximately March of 2020. ETHERIDGE also admitted to filming the sexual assault of the child he identified as a four (4) old female.

ETHERIDGE also admitted to downloading and saving multiple files of child pornography to his Google account, to include the files he produced. ETHERIDGE confirmed he created child pornography utilizing his cellular telephone as a recording device, and granted HSI SAs consent to review the cellular telephone for child pornography. HSI SAs found videos and images depicting young children engaged in sexually explicit conduct constituting child pornography on ETHERIDGE's cellular telephone, and ETHERIDGE confirmed he produced some of those videos and images.

Videos of the child engaged in sexually explicit conduct constituting child pornography were included in the original NCMEC referral, and Etheridge confirmed he was the male subject in the videos depicted sexually abusing the four (4) year old minor victim, and that he had filmed the sexual abuse.